



enabling people with disabilities



STRATEGIC PLAN

2019 - 2023

OUR MISSION

We empower people with disabilities to live SELF DIRECTED lives in an EQUAL and INCLUSIVE society. Each person is SUPPORTED and VALUED within an environment which promotes their overall AUTONOMY, HEALTH and WELLBEING and enables them to reach their POTENTIAL.

OUR VISION

Ability West is dedicated to ENABLING people we support to realise their GOALS and AMBITIONS.

We will deliver on this vision by:

Placing the fundamental rights of the people we support at the centre of our activities and promoting those rights

Empowering each person we support to live self-directed lives and to play a meaningful role in all aspects of community life

Listening and then developing a variety of options that can be used flexibly to meet their identified needs

Developing the skills and dedication of our staff in a supportive and motivating environment

Working in active partnership with the people we support, families, staff, our voluntary supporters and the broader community

Campaigning at local, regional and national level to resource and realise our vision to achieve these aims

OUR CORE VALUES

- Independence
- Partnership
- Openness
- Integrity
- Accountability and Transparency
- Participation in Community Life
- Person Centredness
- Rights Based Approach



Chairman's Introduction

As Chairman of Ability West I am pleased to introduce this five year strategic plan for the years 2019-2023.

From September to November 2018 Ability West engaged and consulted with many stakeholders to re-examine our Vision, Mission and Values and listen to views and suggestions about the future direction of our services. This fourth strategic plan is the blueprint for the future of our services for the next five years. Ability West, established in 1962, is a vibrant organisation that provides services to over 580 children and adults with intellectual disability. The success of the organisation is due to the commitment, dedication and hard work of staff, board members, the people we support, their families, branch members and volunteers.

We provide a variety of services and supports; training, day, community hubs, residential, respite, access to employment opportunities, advocacy, psychology, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, positive behaviour supports, social work and community supports such as home sharing - short breaks, contract families and shared living. Ability West is Patron of four special schools; St. Joseph's, Galway City, St. Oliver's, Tuam, St. Teresa's, Ballinasloe, and Tigh Nan Dooley, An Cheathrú Rua, and we provide respite and community supports to children attending these schools. Ability West's Best Buddies College Programme continues with NUIG and GMIT, volunteers in the community engage in the befriending programme and also assist in our services. *So Can I*, the disability awareness training programme for national and secondary schools and community groups, is also provided subject to available funding.

Since the 2008 economic downturn, Ability West continues to be challenged by financial cuts, increased compliance requirements, responding to the changing needs of people we support and increased demand for services and supports.

I would like to acknowledge the people that avail of Ability West's services and supports, the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team, managers, staff, families and friends of Ability West for their commitment, dedication and willingness to embrace change and work in new ways. The Board of Directors is committed to this plan and to supporting the necessary measures for its successful implementation.



Ray Kelly
Chairman

January 2019

CEO's Introduction

The aim of this Strategic Plan 2019-2023 is to provide a roadmap for services, supports and the organisational development of Ability West and outline the destination that we wish to arrive at. This rolling five year plan will ensure that we are best placed to achieve our vision and mission in the most effective, efficient, fair, equitable and person centred manner. This plan will be underpinned by annual service plans across each directorate and key area, with robust setting of targets, measurable deliverables and outcomes.

Ability West's, services are based in 13 locations across Galway City and County, in almost 60 services, and as of December 2018, we provide services and supports to over 580 children and adults with intellectual disability, many of whom have comorbidities such as autism, physical and sensory disabilities.

The strategic direction and objectives included in this strategic plan are Ability West's response, correlation and our understanding from literature, policy direction, best practice and the significant consultation process undertaken with all relevant stakeholders, which inter alia included; the people we support and who avail of our services, the Service User Council, Board of Directors, Family Forum, Senior Management Team, Middle Management Team, Focus Groups in five geographical areas, Unit Directors/Managers, Staff and Volunteers. My thanks to all who participated for their enthusiasm, dedication and energy involved in developing this plan.

The Health Service Executive (HSE) is the main funder of Ability West and, in addition, we have a robust and innovative fundraising programme which yields vital funding for capital projects. This avenue of funding is extremely important and we ensure best practice in fundraising, transparency and accountability for the funds so generously donated by the public. During 2018 we introduced a suite of policies and procedures which comply with best practice and legislation. We welcome the recent developments in the governance and regulatory environments that we operate in. However, increased compliance means additional costs and this is something that needs to be funded. We also receive funding from the Department of Education and Skills and we are constantly exploring new and innovative fundraising sources to ensure long term financial sustainability and resilience.

Our volunteer programme augments our services and provides a very valuable role in the organisation. As an organisation, we actively explore working in partnership with community and voluntary groups.

In the current economic climate it is imperative that we keep our focus on the strategic direction of Ability West. By implementing this plan we will ensure that we are both efficient and effective in the utilisation of the resources available to us, and that the direction and delivery of services

are at all times person centred and ensure that each person is valued, empowered and has positive outcomes.

In partnership with the people we support and their families we will continue to provide exceptional services and supports that change lives and ensure that people with intellectual disability achieve their potential and live valued lives in their local communities.

This is a rolling plan and the achievement of its strategic priorities, objectives, outcomes and measures will be monitored in a continuous way by the Senior Management Team and the Board of Directors. Over the next five years there will be many opportunities and challenges. New National Policy, New Directions, Value for Money, the Financial Climate, compliance with the National Quality Standards in Residential & Respite Service for Adults and Children among other developments, will undoubtedly pose challenges. We need to be flexible, creative, truly person centred and empower people to have control and choice in their daily lives.

I look forward to leading the implementation of Ability West's ambitious plan and to working closely with the children and adults we support, their families, staff, board members, branch members, volunteers, statutory and non-statutory service providers, in bringing this plan to its fruition.



Breda Crehan-Roche
Chief Executive

January 2019

OUR THANKS

Ability West undertook extensive consultation with key stakeholders and we would like to thank the following for their assistance and support in developing this strategic plan: People we Support, the Service User Council, Board of Directors, Family Forum, Senior Management Team, Middle Management Team, Focus Group Participants in Galway City, Clifden, Mountbellew, Tuam and Portumna, Unit Directors, Managers, Volunteers and Staff (Staff Seminar).

STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Organisation's Culture

Ability West is a person centred organisation. We value, empower and support people to achieve their goals, to reach their potential and to take their rightful place in society. We provide services and supports in local communities and value community integration.

We respect individual rights and treat each person with dignity and respect.

We empower our staff, volunteers and the people we support to work together, to take positive risks, be creative, innovative, positive, enthusiastic, passionate and open minded.

We are creative, flexible and embrace change to ensure that our supports have meaningful impact and deliver high quality positive outcomes.

We constantly strive for continuous improvement in our services and supports.

We are open, accountable, transparent and honest in all our dealings.

Aims and Outcomes

- I. Role model the values of Ability West in all our work.
- II. Audit the culture of our services to ensure that we are delivering on our ethos.

2. Change Management

Ability West will develop a meaningful change management plan focusing on priorities, growth, change and development to ensure positive impact, outcomes and empower self-determination, achievement and choice.

Aims

- I. Ensure that services and supports reflect best practice and are underpinned by person centredness, individualisation, choice and self-determination.
- II. To utilise person centred planning to inform and mould Ability West's model of service delivery so that meeting individual's preferences and needs is central to service planning and delivery.

- III. Ensure we have the ability to be flexible, nimble and adaptive in meeting the requirements and changing needs of the people we support.
- IV. Be a learning organisation, with ongoing development informed by need and anticipated demand.

3. Effective Teams

Ability West is committed to developing and supporting staff to provide high quality services, by working in a collaborative partnership and going the extra mile to produce meaningful outcomes for the people we support.

Aims and Outcomes

- I. Implement performance management throughout the organisation.
- II. Invest in training and ongoing development of staff.
- III. Develop a staff wellbeing strategy.
- IV. Celebrate and disseminate good practices and good news stories.



4. Meaningful Outcomes

Ability West will ensure that all activities deliver meaningful outcomes.

Aims

- I. Implement holistic quality person centred plans that are meaningful and enable the person to achieve their goals and ambitions.

- II. Encourage and enable people to participate in community activities and contribute in a meaningful way to the wider society and environment.
- III. Enable people to have positive relationships, stay connected to their families and community.

5. Community Inclusion

We will support people to have a good life, do ordinary everyday things, use ordinary places with an emphasis on rights, dignity, respect and equality.

Aims

- I. Continue to grow our volunteer and friendship opportunities.
- II. Provide opportunities for people to use their gifts and abilities, enhancing experiences - happiness, pride and a sense of belonging.
- III. Build community partnerships that are positive and create value.
- IV. Lobby for change at local, regional and national level so that people can take their rightful place in society free from barriers and enjoy equal citizenship.

6. Secure Sustainable Resources

Ability West will deliver sustainable resources.

Aims

- I. Ability West will work to secure sustainable resources on an ongoing basis.
- II. Maximise Ability West's profile, explore and target income diversification.
- III. Obtain best value in all our dealings.

7. Continuous Quality Improvement, Monitoring and Evaluation

Ability West will meet standards, regulations and compliance requirements.

Aims

- I. Ability West will ensure that we comply with all legislation and regulations.
- II. Ability West will carry out audits and monitor against plans and targets to ensure continuous improvement.
- III. Ability West will develop annual service plans which deliver on this strategic plan and monitor and evaluate for impact on achieving our Vision and subsequent culture change.

- IV. Ability West will organise focus groups on relevant topics, develop surveys to seek views and feedback.

8. Communication

Ability West will develop a communications strategy for both internal and external communication.

Aims

- I. Ability West encourages communication at all levels; good communication is a vital part of our work and we will use various platforms and technology for communicating with our stakeholders.
- II. Social media will be utilised to promote our work and share good news stories.
- III. Multi-directional communication will be open and transparent between all stakeholders, with an emphasis on trust, respect and honesty.